

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-22 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Examiner has rejected claims 1-29 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,007,163 ("*Walker'163*") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,224,486 ("*Walker'486*"). The Examiner's rejection of claims is fully traversed below.

Claims have been presented in a form which is believed to be more preferred by the Examiner. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features of claim 16.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has alleged that the "game device for a flat play session" described in *Walker'163* can be combined with the "database driven online distributed tournament system" described in *Walker'486* to teach the claimed invention.

Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, it is respectfully submitted that *Walker'163* does not teach: determining a duration a player may play in a tournament based on identifier associated with a game card. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 and 21 are patentable over *Walker'163* for this additional reason.

Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that *Walker'486* does not teach or suggest: enabling the first gaming unit for play in a tournament by at least loading gaming software to the first gaming unit in order to configure the first unit to play in the tournament.

Based on the foregoing, it is submitted that the claims are patentably distinct over the cited art of record. Additional limitations recited in the independent claims or the dependent claims are not further discussed because the limitations discussed above are sufficient to distinguish the claimed invention from the cited art. Accordingly, Applicant believes that all pending claims are allowable and respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance for this application from the Examiner.

Applicant hereby petitions for an extension of time which may be required to maintain the pendency of this case, and any required fee for such extension or any further fee required in connection with the filing of this Amendment is to be charged to Deposit Account No. 500388 (Order No. IGT1P280). Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,
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